United Nations A/71/824

General Assembly

Distr.: General
3 March 2017
English
Original: Spanish

Seventy-first session
Agenda item 35
Question of Palestine

Letter dated 30 January 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to write to you in reference to the event marking the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust, which the General Assembly held on Friday, 27 January 2017 to honour the millions of Jews who were victims of the Nazi regime's extermination policy during the Second World War.

At this event, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela only reiterated its firm condemnation of the atrocious crimes perpetrated by the Nazi regime against the Jewish people and other ethnic groups and political opponents alike. Those crimes shook the world and are a reminder of the international community's moral and political obligation to prevent the recurrence of such a tragedy.

However, Venezuela regrets that the Permanent Representative of Israel tarnished the solemnity of the event by levelling unfair accusations that portrayed Venezuela as an anti-Semitic country. This is clearly a fallacy, for Venezuela has demonstrated its solidarity by welcoming millions of victims of armed conflict and natural disasters from around the world. During the Second World War, thousands of Jews were welcomed, without discrimination; they became part of the political, economic, social and cultural fabric of the multicultural and diverse nation that is Venezuela.

The aggressive attitude displayed by the Permanent Representative of Israel during a ceremony that called for calm and reverent reflection is an illustration of that country's strategy of discrediting Member States that have criticized or condemned the Israeli Government's policies that violate humanitarian law and the human rights of the Palestinian people. Palestinians have endured a prolonged military occupation — spanning almost 50 years — that denies their fundamental rights, including the right to self-determination, as well as an illegal and perverse blockade in Gaza. The threats levelled by Israel against States that voted in favour of Security Council resolution 2334 (2016) clearly reflect that country's disregard

Please recycle

for international law and, in particular, the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Venezuela advocates a peaceful and negotiated solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that would create the conditions for two free, sovereign and independent States — Israel and Palestine — living side by side within internationally recognized pre-1967 borders. To this end, the Organization must make every effort to promote the existence of a viable Palestinian State, as a Member of the United Nations on equal footing with other nations and with East Jerusalem as its capital. Venezuela shall continue to defend its position with dignity and in line with the diplomatic practices and methodology that govern this Organization. Venezuela shall not be deterred by conduct such as that displayed at the aforementioned event by the Permanent Representative of Israel, which marred what should have remained a sincere tribute to the victims of Nazi barbarity.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the promotion and respect of human rights and international humanitarian law, which are the shared and inexorable goals of the international community in building peace.

It would be greatly appreciated if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 35.

(*Signed*) Rafael **Ramírez**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of
Venezuela to the United Nations